

REMARKS

Claims 1-45 are present in the application. Claims 1 and 4 have been amended. Claims 43-45 have been added. Claim 1 is independent. Reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested.

Interview With The Examiner

An interview was conducted with the Examiner in charge of the above-identified application on April 18, 2007. Applicants greatly appreciate the courtesy shown by the Examiner during the interview.

In the interview with the Examiner, Applicants' representative presented argument with regard to the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a). Specifically, it was argued that the compatibility rules are not represented by the functional hierarchy shown in FIG. 2 of Lynch. The Examiner stated that this argument is noted and further review and consideration of Lynch will be necessary on this claimed feature.

In addition, Applicants' representative also presented proposed claim amendment to further distinguish the present invention from Lynch. In particular, Applicants' representative proposed to recite that the Directed Acyclic Graph (DAG) is a non-tree structure. The Examiner stated that this recitation would be sufficient to distinguish the present invention from Lynch. The Examiner also suggested amending claim 4 to clarify the claimed invention.

Therefore, Applicants' representative agreed to file a supplemental amendment to further recite "the DAG being a non-tree structure" in claim 1 and to amend claim 4 as the Examiner

suggested. The Examiner also agreed to enter the supplemental amendment if it is filed by April 19, 2007.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102 & 103

Claims 1-3, 5-12, 15, 24, 25 30-34 and 36-42 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Lynch, U.S. Patent No. 5,515,524. Claims 13, 14, 16-23 and 26-29 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lynch in view of Andersen, "An Introduction to Binary Decision Diagram". Claims 4 and 35 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lynch in view of Polish, U.S. Patent No. 6,430,531. Claims 7-9, 24, 25, 32-34 and 36-42 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lynch in view of Andersen, and further in view of Henson, U.S. Patent No. 6,167,383. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

As mentioned above, independent claim 1 has been amended as proposed during the interview to recite "the DAG being a non-tree structure." Independent claim 1 has also been amended to further clarify the invention. In particular, independent claim 1 now recites "providing, for each component, information relating to a group of alternatives for the component", "defining rules relating to compatibilities between alternatives from different components, representing the rules in a Directed Acyclic Graph (DAG), the DAG being a non-tree structure" and "iteratively configuring the product by repeatedly: choosing a current component, selecting one of alternatives for the current component, checking the DAG whether the selected alternative is compatible with other selected alternatives of other chosen

components.” Applicants respectfully submit that the above combination of steps as set forth in independent claim 1 is not disclosed nor suggested by the references relied on by the Examiner.

In particular, FIG. 2 of Lynch is simply a tree structure. Lynch in FIG. 2 or elsewhere fails to disclose any non-tree structure. Therefore, Lynch fails to teach “the DAG being a non-tree structure” as recited in amended claim 1.

In addition, FIG. 2 of Lynch simply is a functional hierarchy which only define the function that a component performs and cannot provide the ability to daisy chain components (see also col. 4, lines 9-51). Lynch nowhere discloses that the compatibility rules are represented by the functional hierarchy shown in FIG. 2 of Lynch. Instead, Lynch discloses that the Debugger options reads component request from a request file and attempt to configure those components using selected constrains in the current ParseFile (see col. 27, lines 12-15). However, the ParseFile has nothing to do with the functional hierarchy shown in FIG. 2 of Lynch. Therefore, Lynch also fails to teach “representing the rules in a Directed Acyclic Graph (DAG)” as recited in claim 1.

With regard to the Examiner’s reliance on Polish, Henson and Andersen, these references have only been relied on for their teachings related to the subject matter of dependent claims. These references also fail to disclose the above combination of steps as set forth in amended independent claim 1. Accordingly, these references fail to cure the deficiencies of Lynch.

Accordingly, none of the references utilized by the Examiner individually or in combination teach or suggest the limitations of independent claim 1 or its dependent claims. Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 1 and its dependent claims clearly define over the teachings of the references relied on by the Examiner.

Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102 and 103 are respectfully requested.

Additional Claims

Claims 43-45 have been added for the Examiner's consideration.

Applicants respectfully submit that new dependent claims 43-45 depend, either directly or indirectly, from amended independent claim 1, and are therefore allowable based on their respective dependence from amended independent claim 1, which is believed to be allowable.

Favorable consideration and allowance of claims 43-45 are respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

Since the remaining patents cited by the Examiner have not been utilized to reject the claims, but merely to show the state of the prior art, no further comments are necessary with respect thereto.

It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the Office Action, and that as such, the Examiner is respectfully requested to send the application to Issue.

In the event there are any matters remaining in this application, the Examiner is invited to contact Joe McKinney Muncy, Registration No. 32,334 at (703) 205-8000 in the Washington, D.C. area.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

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Respectfully submitted,

By 

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